



So you want to work in ... a Law Firm?

While working in a legal environment isn't a requirement for law school, we encourage students to experience the law firm environment firsthand, prior to committing three years of time and tuition. Approximately 70% of law students work in a firm after graduation, so even if practicing law isn't your long-term goal, exploring the firm environment can be beneficial.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

In most law firms, there isn't a big difference between an intern (paid or unpaid) and a part-time position. You should expect the responsibilities to be similar and to be assigned to a few mundane tasks such as filing, answering phones, etc. The important thing is to observe how the lawyers spend their time, since that is where you are presumably headed. It's likely you will start out at the bottom, but as you prove yourself, you may be given more interesting responsibilities.

WHERE TO LOOK

In order to find a law firm opportunity, it's important to use your network. Many students find law firm jobs by inheriting a friend's old position. Start asking your friends, classmates, or members of student organizations if they anticipate leaving their position in the future. Many law firms expedite the hiring process by asking current employees for recommendations.

Law firms often target students by posting opportunities on:

- HireUTexas - UT's campus-wide internship and job board, <http://goo.gl/58hbmK>
- Hire-a-Longhorn - UT's part-time, seasonal and campus job board, www.hirealonghorn.org
- BTT Gateway - the College of Liberal Arts internship and job board, <http://goo.gl/O8Zxfq>
- Indeed.com - an open source internship and job search engine, www.indeed.com

Explore the LACS internship site review page to read previous students' reviews of their internships with law firms, government agencies and legislative offices: <http://goo.gl/UfT1tS>

WHAT ARE COMMON NON-LEGAL LAW FIRM TITLES?

Law firms regularly hire non-legal administrative and professional employees. While people in these roles do not practice law, they are heavily involved in law firm operations. Common titles include paralegal, law clerk, legal assistant, runner, legal secretary and legal intern.

EXPLORING LAW FIRMS & POSITIONS

Book of Lists: The Book of Lists is a professional directory listing the top companies/organizations in particular industries, including the top 25 law firms in cities across the country. A hardcopy of The Book of Lists can be found in the LACS Career Resource Library (FAC 18). A digital copy can be accessed through your BTT Gateway account under the external links tab: [<http://goo.gl/O8Zxfq>].

Martindale: If you have a particular specialization of interest (environmental law, immigration law, etc.), explore the Martindale-Hubbell lawyer locator service at [www.martindale.com]. This site lists all firms in a particular city by specialty. It includes information for the practicing lawyers at each firm, including name, alma mater, foreign languages skills, and more.



Vault: Explore the *Vault Guide to the Top 100 Law Firms* for help researching and evaluating law firms, including the location, base salaries, reviews, and quality of life meters. The guide is available in hardcopy in the LACS Career Resource Library, (FAC 18). Access Vault online via your BTT Gateway account under the External Links tab: [<http://goo.gl/O8Zxfq>].

LinkedIn Alumni Tool: Consider using LinkedIn's alumni tool to connect with UT Austin graduates working in the legal profession: [<https://www.linkedin.com/edu/?tab=alumni>]. This tool allows you to narrow your search by city, graduation dates and specific law firms. Explore alumni profiles to learn about what they do and about the previous experiences that led to their current positions.

QUALITIES & SKILLS NEEDED TO SUCCEED IN A LAW FIRM

Law firms look for students who are dependable, organized, can multitask, and function in a professional environment (dress professionally, answer the phone professionally, etc.). Previous work experience in a professional office setting or in customer service is a plus. Strong writing and grammar skills, detail-oriented able to prioritize and work well under pressure. Many firms look for bilingual students. Be sure to market the skills that make you a strong candidate.

SO...WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP BREAK INTO A LAW FIRM?

1. **Craft a compelling resume and cover letter** – Demonstrate your interest in legal affairs, research skills, and ability to problem solve in your documents. For help getting started, use our online resume writing guide: [<http://goo.gl/7K2HPA>]. The next step is to have your documents reviewed by a LACS Career Coach. To schedule an appointment, call 512-471-7900.
2. **Get involved** – Join a pre-law organization such as Phi Alpha Delta, Minority Women Pursuing Law, the Prelaw National Black Law School Association, Plan II Law Society, Texas Undergraduate Law Review or Undergraduate Mock Trial Association. To learn of more organizations like these, please access HornsLink: [<https://utexas.collegiatelink.net>].
3. **Network** – Start asking your friends, fellow classmates, members of pre-law organizations and sorority or fraternity members if they anticipate leaving their position in the future. Having someone else put in a good word for you is a quick way to get your resume on top of the pile.
4. **Meet with a Career Coach** – Unsure if working at a law firm is for you or what to do next? Meet with a career coach to discuss more: [<http://goo.gl/IRVsFJ>].
5. **Law School** – If you are considering a JD to practice law, visit with a law school admissions coach: [<http://goo.gl/Zw4Gsf>].